



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL | DISTRICT 3

COUNCILMEMBER KSHAMA SAWANT

Dec. 18, 2019

Chris Szala, Community House
851 Poplar Place S
Seattle, WA 98144

Philippa Nye, Ally Community Development
Ally Community Development LLC
5220 25th Avenue SW
Seattle, WA 98106

Dear Mr. Szala and Ms. Nye:

I am writing on behalf of Mary Wesley, long-time owner of ***Flowers Just for U***, and the many community members who have reached out to my Council office in recent days.

Specifically, I was deeply concerned to hear that Community House may not be welcoming back the flower shop, the only Black-owned florist in the Pacific Northwest, when your building is completed in the coming months. If this information is not correct, and you are indeed open to having Ms. Wesley's business return to 23rd and Jackson, please clarify that for me and community members.

I appreciate your contribution towards affordable housing, as exemplified by the Jackson Heights building, and your pledge to offer housing to individuals and family members who have historical ties to the Central District. I would urge that the same principles should apply to how you select the businesses to occupy the ground floor of the new building.

Ms. Wesley successfully operated her business at 23rd and Jackson for a quarter-century before being displaced by your development, and had every expectation of being offered space when the building was done.

Flowers Just for U is an iconic, beloved store in our Central District community. Indeed, I see that you recognize that fact, by advertising Jackson Heights as "the old Flower Shop Building" in your promotional postcards!

Thanks to an outpouring of community support in the last 4 days, Ms. Wesley has staved off immediate eviction from her location at 23rd and Cherry, a temporary business site that she was moved to when you began construction at 23rd and Jackson. But as you know, the current location is not favorable to running a successful floral business, and she desires to return to her historic location.

I have directed my staff to work with you, Africatown, and Ms. Wesley with that goal in mind. Jonathan Rosenblum, community organizer in my office, will be reaching out to you, or you can contact him directly at 206-257-3508 or jonathan.rosenblum@seattle.gov.

My Council office is committed to work with Ms. Wesley and the entire community to ensure that she is able to return to her historic location in 2020, and we urge your active support in that goal as well.

Sincerely,



Kshama Sawant
Seattle City Council, District 3

Cc: Jonathan Rosenblum
Mary Wesley
K. Wyking Garrett, Africatown
Walter Jones, WJJ Consulting on behalf of Africatown